

1 The reduction of *Legionella* spp. in water and in soil by a citrus plant extract vapour

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9 Running title: Effectiveness of a citrus EO vapour against *Legionella* spp. in soil and water.

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## 20 Abstract

21 Legionnaires disease is a severe form of pneumonia caused by *Legionella* spp. often isolated  
22 from environmental sources including soil and water. *Legionella* spp. are capable of  
23 replicating intracellularly within free living protozoa, once this has occurred *Legionella* spp.  
24 is particularly resistant to disinfectants. Citrus Essential Oils (EOs) vapours are effective  
25 antimicrobials against a range of microorganisms, with reductions of 5 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> on a  
26 variety of surfaces. The aim of this investigation was to assess the efficacy of a citrus EO  
27 vapour against *Legionella* spp. in water and in soil systems. Reductions of viable cells of  
28 *Legionella pneumophila*, *Legionella longbeachae*, *Legionella bozemanii* and *intra-amoebal*  
29 *culture of Legionella pneumophila* (water system only), were assessed in soil and in water  
30 after exposure to a citrus EO vapour at concentrations ranging from 3.75 mg/l air to 15g/l air.  
31 Antimicrobial efficacy via different delivery systems (passive and active sintering of the  
32 vapour) was conducted in water and GC-MS analysis of the antimicrobial components  
33 (linalool, citral and  $\beta$ -pinene) determined. There was up to a 5 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> reduction in  
34 *Legionella* spp. in soil after exposure to the citrus EOs vapour (15 mg/l air). The most  
35 susceptible strain in water was *L. pneumophila* with a 4 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> reduction after 24 hrs  
36 via sintering (15 g/l air). Sintering the vapour through water increased the presence of the  
37 antimicrobial components, with a 61% increase of linalool. Therefore, the appropriate method  
38 of delivery of an antimicrobial citrus EO vapour may go some way in controlling *Legionella*  
39 spp. from environmental sources.

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### 43 Introduction

44 In 2011, 4 897 cases of Legionnaires disease were reported by EU member states and  
45 Norway and Iceland, with six countries (France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Netherlands and the  
46 United Kingdom) contributing to 83% of all the cases<sup>(1)</sup>. In the same year 239 cases were  
47 reported by the National Surveillance Scheme in England and Wales, with the number of  
48 cases steadily increasing since the mid-1990s when, on average, between 110 and 160 cases  
49 per annum were recorded <sup>(2)</sup>.

50 Legionnaires disease is a severe form of pneumonia <sup>(2,3)</sup> caused by the Gram-negative, aerobic  
51 rod *Legionella* spp., It mainly affects the elderly and immune-compromised people and is  
52 more generally reported in men <sup>(3,4)</sup>. *Legionella pneumophila* is the predominant human  
53 pathogenic strain and is responsible for about 90% of all human infections by *Legionella* spp.  
54 <sup>(5,6)</sup>. Sixteen serotypes of *L. pneumophila* exist, but serotype 1 is the most important clinically  
55 <sup>(5)</sup>. An international collaborative survey showed that 84.2% of all isolates in patients with  
56 community acquired Legionnaires disease were serotype 1<sup>(7)</sup>. However, *Legionella*  
57 *longbeachae* and *Legionella bozemanii* were also isolated at rates of 3.9 % and 2.4 %  
58 respectively <sup>(7)</sup>. However incidence rates vary from country to country and also from source  
59 to source. For example, *L. longbeachae* is the most commonly isolated species from patients  
60 in Australia <sup>(8)</sup>, accounting for about 30% of *Legionella* isolates from Australia and New  
61 Zealand. A recent study by Currie et al (2013)<sup>(9)</sup> in the UK has shown that 15 out of 24  
62 compost samples positive for *Legionella* spp. with *L. longbeachae* being the most commonly  
63 isolated. In one study, *L. longbeachae* was found in the sputum of a patient who had been  
64 in contact with potting soil <sup>(6)</sup>, and it was suggested that aerosol-aided spread and  
65 evaporation of water in the potting soil were the possible routes of transmission <sup>(6,10)</sup>.  
66 *Legionella* have also been isolated from waste management facilities dealing with unwashed  
67 solid articles, probably via exposure to soil <sup>(11)</sup>.

68 The natural habitat of *Legionella* is fresh water such as lakes and rivers <sup>(3)</sup> where it grows  
69 planktonically or in biofilms, with an optimum temperature range for growth and survival of  
70 between 30° and 40°C. However, it can enter man-made water systems and survive thus  
71 creating a potential source for infection. Previous studies have isolated the bacterium from  
72 drinking water systems, cooling towers of air conditioning units, whirlpools, spas, fountains,  
73 ice machines, vegetable misters, dental devices and shower heads <sup>(12)</sup>. Infection in humans  
74 occurs via inhalation of an aerosolised form of *Legionella* spp. from a contaminated source or  
75 via aspiration of contaminated water, which can occur within milliseconds <sup>(5,6,10)</sup>. There are  
76 no specific standards in the UK for acceptable levels of *Legionella* spp. in water, however,  
77 there is a statutory requirement that the owners of buildings that have equipment predisposed  
78 to *Legionella* spp. must ensure that the equipment is maintained to prevent the growth and  
79 spread of the organism <sup>(13)</sup>.

80 *Legionella* spp. are also capable of invading and replicating intra-cellularly within free living  
81 protozoa <sup>(3,12)</sup>. *Acanthamoeba polyphaga* is the most common host of *Legionella* spp. in  
82 natural environments <sup>(3)</sup>. Free-living amoebae are capable of forming cysts which confers  
83 resistance to extreme temperatures, desiccation and disinfection <sup>(14)</sup> and also provide  
84 protection to the intracellular *Legionella* cells hence making them more able to survive  
85 similarly unfavourable conditions. Furthermore, several studies have shown that *L.*  
86 *pneumophila* exhibits a higher stress resistance and is more invasive and virulent, after it has  
87 replicated within a protozoa cell <sup>(3,12,15)</sup>. It has been suggested that *Legionella* cells invade and  
88 grow within human macrophages in a similar way as they do within protozoan cells <sup>(16)</sup>.

89 Commonly chemical disinfectants or biocides are used to prevent microbial contamination  
90 and growth of prospective pathogenic microorganisms in man-made aquatic sites <sup>(14)</sup>.  
91 However, they are only effective in high concentrations which tend to be harmful to humans  
92 and thus the use of natural alternatives to these chemicals may reduce risk of toxicity. Citrus

93 Essential Oils (EOs) were first noted for their antimicrobial effect in 1949 by Piacentini <sup>(17)</sup>.  
94 In contrast to chemical disinfectants citrus EOs are “Generally Recognised As Safe” (GRAS)  
95 and therefore are acceptable for use in food and water systems.

96 In recent studies, the treatment of a range of pathogenic bacteria including MRSA, both  
97 vancomycin-susceptible and vancomycin-resistant strains of *Enterococcus faecium* and  
98 *Enterococcus faecalis* have been shown to be susceptible to the vaporised form of the unique  
99 blend of the citrus essential oils at a concentration of 15mg/l air <sup>(18, 19)</sup>. Furthermore, the citrus  
100 EO vapour used in this study has been shown to be effective against the foodborne pathogens  
101 *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Escherichia coli* O157 and *Campylobacter jejuni* <sup>(20,</sup>  
102 <sup>21)</sup>. However, to date, the studies on the antimicrobial nature of the citrus EO vapour have  
103 only tested its effectiveness on surfaces such as stainless steel and other food surfaces and not  
104 against microorganisms in liquid systems because of the hydrophobic nature of its  
105 components. In addition, the use of EOs in water is not very effective because their vapours  
106 mainly consist of phenolic compounds which have poor solubility resulting in a reduced  
107 antimicrobial activity. Water also reduces volatility as compounds with hydroxyl groups may  
108 be more solvated and remain in water phase <sup>(22)</sup>. Previous studies using a bio-autography  
109 method followed by Atmospheric Pressure Chemical Ionisation (APCI-MS) and SPME GC-  
110 MS have shown that there is a favourable release of the active compounds (linalool, citral and  
111  $\beta$ -pinene) from the citrus EO vapour which facilitates the antimicrobial activity <sup>(23)</sup>.

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113 The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the antimicrobial citrus EO  
114 vapour against *Legionella* spp. in soil and to establish if sintering is effective as an active  
115 delivery system against *Legionella* spp. and intra-amoebal *L. pneumophila* in water.

## 116 **Methods**

117 All investigations were carried out in duplicate on at least three separate occasions.

118 *Micro-organisms and Culturing Methods*

119 *Legionella pneumophila* (ATCC 33152), *Legionella longbeachae* (ATCC-33462) and  
120 *Legionella bozemanii* (ATCC 33217) were grown on *Legionella* CYE agar base (CM0655)  
121 supplemented with *Legionella* BYCE growth supplement (SR0110C) at 37°C for 48 hrs.  
122 *Acanthamoeba polyphaga* (CCAP 1501/14) was cultured using Peptone Yeast Glucose  
123 (PYG) medium (10g proteose-peptone, 0.5g yeast extract, 0.1M glucose, 25ml Page's  
124 Amoebal saline Solution (PAS) 1, 25ml PAS 2, 450ml water) adjusted to pH 6.5 with KOH.  
125 PAS solutions <sup>(24)</sup>. Aliquots of 1 ml of *A. polyphaga* cultures were suspended in 5ml PYG  
126 medium in tissue culture flasks. The protozoa cultures were incubated for three days at 35°C.

127 *Preparation of Acanthamoeba polyphaga for co-culture experiments*

128 PYG broth (22 ml) was inoculated with 2 ml of a three day *A. polyphaga* culture. The culture  
129 flasks were incubated horizontally for three days at room temperature.

130 After incubation flasks were shaken to remove the protozoa from their surface. The sample  
131 was centrifuged at 400g (HettichRotanta 460 S Tuttlingen, Germany) for 6 min at room  
132 temperature. The pellet was then washed twice in 20 ml of PAS and re-suspended in 15 ml of  
133 amoebal saline. Cell counts were obtained using a haemocytometer (Thoma, Hawsley  
134 London, 0.1 mm, 1/400 mm<sup>2</sup>). Co-culturing required a final concentration of 10<sup>5</sup> cells ml<sup>-1</sup>.

135 *Intra-amoebal culture of Legionella pneumophila*

136 A suspension of 10 ml *A. polyphaga* (10<sup>5</sup> cells ml<sup>-1</sup>) was mixed with a suspension of 10 ml *L.*  
137 *pneumophila* (10<sup>2</sup> cells ml<sup>-1</sup>) in a tissue culture flask and incubated at 35°C for 10 days. The  
138 sample was then centrifuged at 400g for 6 min at room temperature to remove the protozoa.  
139 The supernatant was subsequently centrifuged at 2080g for 15 min at room temperature and

discarded. The pellet was washed twice with 20 ml PAS. The resulting suspension ( $10^5$  cells  $\text{ml}^{-1}$ ) was then mixed with 20 ml of a fresh three day-old culture of *A. polyphaga* ( $10^5$  cells  $\text{ml}^{-1}$ ) and incubated again at 35°C for three days. The wash steps were then repeated. The final pellet was re-suspended in 20 ml PAS, with a final concentration of *Legionella* of  $10^8$  cells  $\text{ml}^{-1}$ .

#### *Citrus EO vapour and vapour components*

The citrus EO blend consisted of orange (*Citrus sinensis*) and bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*) essential oils (Belmay, Northampton, UK) in a 1:1 (v/v). Limonene 97%, (18, 316-4), linalool 97% (W26, 350-8), citral 95% (C8, 300-7),  $\beta$ -pinene 99% (402753) were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich Co. Ltd. (Dorset, UK).

#### *The assessment of a citrus EO vapour and its components against Legionella spp. in soil*

Potting soil (potting mix, Miracle Gro, Scotts, UK) was sterilised and 1.5 g placed in a petri dish in a 1000 ml beaker. The soil was inoculated with either 400  $\mu\text{l}$  of *L. pneumophila*, *L. longbeachae* or *L. bozemanii*. Filter papers (Whatman disks, 2cm) were impregnated with the EO mix to give final concentrations of either 3.75 mg/l air, 7.5 mg/l air or 15 mg/l air and sealed with parafilm (FIL1026, Scientific Laboratory Supplies, UK). The beakers were incubated for 24 h at 37 °C. The soil was then placed in 30 ml of maximum recover diluent (MRD), vortexed for 2 min., spread plated onto CYE agar, incubated for 48 hrs at 37°C and counts obtained. Controls were inoculated soil samples not exposed to the citrus EO vapour or components.

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#### *Survival of Legionella spp. in water after exposure to the citrus EO vapour*

#### *Passive Exposure*

163 Cells of either *L. pneumophila*, *L. longbeachae* or *L. bozemanii* or *L. pneumophila* that had  
164 been passaged through *A. polyphaga* were inoculated into sterile water in 1L beakers to give  
165 a final concentration of  $10^7$  cells  $\text{ml}^{-1}$ . Filter papers impregnated with the citrus oil to give  
166 final concentrations of 3.75 mg/l air, 7.5mg/l air, 15mg/l air, 150mg/l air or 15g/l air in the  
167 atmosphere were placed in the beaker, which was sealed and incubated at room temperature  
168 for 24 h. After exposure 100  $\mu\text{l}$  samples were spread plated on CYE agar and incubated at  
169 37°C for 48 hrs and colonies counted. Controls were water samples not exposed to the citrus  
170 EO vapour.

#### 171 *Active Exposure*

172 A cylinder filled with compressed air was connected to a 500ml vacuum flask (headspace:  
173 590 ml), containing either 150 mg/l air, 820.5 mg/l air or 1500 mg/l air of citrus EO vapour.  
174 A sinter (10 micron pores, Sigma Aldrich, UK), running from the vacuum flask was then  
175 placed into a 100ml conical flask containing 100ml water and *L. pneumophila* at a final  
176 concentration of  $10^6$  cells  $\text{ml}^{-1}$  (Figure 1), the sinter forces the air containing the EO through  
177 micron size pores into the water creating small bubbles which continuously move through the  
178 water sample. The citrus EO vapour was left to equilibrate in the vacuum flask for 15 min  
179 before the air flow (0.225 L/min) and the heating plate (30°C) were switched on. Samples  
180 were removed at 0, 1, 2, 4, 6 and 24 h after starting the air flow, spread plated onto a CYE  
181 agar plate in triplicate, incubated at 37°C for 48 hrs and colonies counted.

182 The investigations were repeated using either *L. longbeachae*, *L. bozemanii* or an intra-  
183 amoebal culture of *L. pneumophila* and the concentration of citrus EO vapour shown to be the  
184 most effective against *L. pneumophila*. Controls were cells exposed to pure air flow.

185

## 186 GC-MS Analysis

187 To quantify the active antimicrobial components (linalool, citral and  $\beta$ -pinene) in the passive  
188 and active exposure, the same apparatus as described above was used, but without  
189 microorganisms added to the water. Additionally, the initial amount of citrus EO was  
190 increased by 10 fold (15g/L) to enable detection. GC-MS analysis was undertaken on the  
191 citrus EO vapour in water or in ethanol without any further sample preparation. Experiments  
192 were performed for 24hrs in the case of water, and 4 hrs for ethanol due to volatility  
193 limitations (Table 1). All experiments were performed in duplicate.

194

195 The GC-MS analyses were performed using a Bruker 450GC and 300-MS SQ mass  
196 spectrometer operated in EI mode at 70eV. A sample volume of 1 $\mu$ L with split ratio of 10:1  
197 was injected at an inlet temperature of 250°C. The carrier gas was helium and maintained at a  
198 constant flow rate of 1.0 mLmin<sup>-1</sup>. The gas chromatograph was equipped with a FactorFour  
199 VF-5MS capillary column (30m long  $\times$  0.25mm ID) with 0.25  $\mu$ m film thickness. The  
200 temperature of the column was held at 40°C for 2min, ramped to 70°C 10°C min<sup>-1</sup>, hold for 5  
201 min, ramped to 150°C at 5°C min<sup>-1</sup>, hold for 1 min and then ramped to 200°C at 10°C min<sup>-1</sup>.

202

203 The MS ion source temperature was 180°C. Quantitative analysis was carried out using  
204 selected ion monitoring (SIM) mode at 70 eV. For each compound, the most abundant ions  
205 were selected from its spectrum. The chosen ions for SIM were 69, 84 and 152 for citral, 93,  
206 69, 79 and 136 for  $\beta$ -pinene, 71, 93 and 154 for linalool. The limits of quantification for all  
207 three antimicrobial agents were 1.0 mg/l.

208

## 209 Results

210

211 The citrus EO vapour at concentrations as low as 3.75mg/l air reduced *Legionella* spp. by  
212 between 0.5-1.5 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> in soil, however, when this concentration was increased to that  
213 of 15mg/l air which has previously been shown to be effective against a range of different  
214 microorganisms on surfaces, up to a 8 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> reduction was observed against *L.*  
215 *bozemanii* compared to 1.53 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> and 0.7 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> log<sub>(10)</sub> for *L. longbecheae* and  
216 *L. pneumophila* respectively (Table 2).

217 When water inoculated with *Legionella* cells was passively subjected to the citrus EO vapour  
218 no reductions in counts were observed at 3.75 mg/l air, 7.5 mg/l air, 15mg/l air or 150 mg/l  
219 air. However, when subjected to 15 g/l air a 2 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> reduction occurred for *L.*  
220 *longbeachae*, although the other strains were unaffected (results not shown).

221 Actively sintering the citrus EO vapour into water inoculated with *L. pneumophila* resulted in  
222 reductions over 24hrs of 1.5 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> and 4.5 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) for 150mg/l air and  
223 1500 mg/l air respectively (Figure 2). These concentrations are 10-100 fold higher than that  
224 previously shown (15mg/l air) to reduce microorganisms on surfaces such as stainless steel  
225 (Fisher and Phillips, 2009a)

226

227 A reduction in cells numbers of *Legionella* spp. in water treated with a citrus EO vapour  
228 (15g/l) through a sintering system is observed at 2 hrs exposure with reductions of between 1  
229 - 2 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup>. *L. pneumophila* was the most susceptible with a 4 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> ( $p \leq 0.05$ )  
230 reduction in cell numbers at 24 hrs while *L. bozemanii* and *L. longbeachae* were reduced by  
231 2.8 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> and 2.2 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> respectively. However, the vapour only had a  
232 minimal effect on the co-cultured *L. pneumophila* with a 1.24 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> reduction in cell

233 numbers over 24 hrs (Figure 3). There was no significant difference ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) between the  
234 active and passive systems of delivery of the citrus EO vapour against *L. longbeachae* where  
235 a 2 log cells  $\text{ml}^{-1}$  reduction was observed in both systems.

236

237 Only linalool was detected in water when 15g/l citrus EO vapour was passed through either  
238 passively or through the sintering system (active diffusion) which can be attributed to the  
239 relatively high water solubility of linalool (see Table 1). As shown in Figure 4, there was no  
240 significant difference in linalool content of water between the passive and active systems  
241 with concentrations of 24.9 mg/l and 26.5 mg/l linalool respectively after 45 min exposure.  
242 From 1 hr onwards a significant difference ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) in concentration of linalool in the water  
243 was noted. After 24 hr exposure, the linalool concentration was 35.43 mg/l and 57.17 mg/l in  
244 the passive and active systems respectively, making the linalool content in the active system  
245 61% more than that in the passive system.

246

247 When ethanol was the solute, no linalool was detected within the first 30 mins in solution  
248 either when the citrus EO vapour was diffused passively or by active sintering. After 4 hr the  
249 linalool content was 46% higher in the active system (Figure 5). This trend of higher linalool  
250 concentration in solution in the active system is similar to that observed when water was used  
251 as the solute and this is also the case for both citral and  $\beta$ -pinene. However, citral showed the  
252 highest difference with up to 2.35 fold more in the active system after 4 hrse.

253

## 254 Discussion

255 Overall the citrus antimicrobial vapour was active against *Legionella* spp. However, the  
256 extent of its efficacy was dependent on strain and substrate. In soil the vapour was most  
257 effective against *L. bozemanii* at 15mg/l air (Table 2) with a 7.88 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> reduction,  
258 there was no significant difference in reductions between the controls and 15mg/l air of citrus  
259 EO vapour against *L. longbeacheae* and *L. pneumophila*, demonstrating the vapour to have  
260 strain specific activity. *L. longbeacheae* is the most isolated *Legionella* spp. from potting soil  
261 in Australia (58%), with the rates of isolation of *L. pneumophila* being 13.3% <sup>(10)</sup>. Against  
262 both *L. longbeacheae* and *L. bozemanii* the most effective concentration of the citrus EO  
263 vapour was 15mg/l air. Similar results have been previously reported for *Enterococcus* spp.  
264 survival on a range of surfaces included, lettuce, cucumber and stainless steel with  
265 reductions of up to 5 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> <sup>(19,25)</sup>.

266 The use of essential oils (EOs) as antimicrobials in water -based environments has not been  
267 explored in depth which is probably due to the lipophilic nature for the EOs and their relative  
268 insolubility in water. Traditionally when assessing EOs minimum inhibitory concentration,  
269 an agar dilution method is usually chosen above that of a broth dilution method for this very  
270 reason <sup>(6)</sup>. However, improvements to methodologies for the determining the antimicrobial  
271 efficacy of EOs in broth cultures with the use of emulsifiers have been made, making the  
272 assessment of EOs in aqueous solutions more effective<sup>(26)</sup>. The use of a sintering system to  
273 force the vapours of EOs through water eliminates the need for other emulsifying agents such  
274 as ethanol and Tween 80, thus increasing its potential use within equipment predisposed to  
275 *Legionella* spp. such as air conditioning units

276 The use of the vapours of EOs rather than EOs *per se* allows for single components to be  
277 targeted and analysed for their solubility and antimicrobial efficacy in water. Previous  
278 studies have shown that linalool, citral and  $\beta$ -pinene are the main antimicrobial components  
279 of the citrus EO vapour as determined by a bioautography method<sup>(23)</sup>.

280 Figures 1-4 demonstrate that the use of a sintering system, thus forcing the vapours  
281 components through the water gives a greater reduction in *Legionella* spp. compared to  
282 natural diffusion of the components. The consequent reduction in cell numbers increased  
283 from zero in the passive system to 4.5 log<sub>10</sub> (Figure 2) in the active system against *L.*  
284 *pneumophila* at a citrus EO vapour concentration of 15g/l air. However, the concentration of  
285 the vapour needed to reduce the *Legionella* counts in water had to increase from 15mg/l air  
286 observed to be active in a soil system and other surfaces by 100 fold to 15g/l air when being  
287 sintered into water. There is limited published research on the effect of EOs in water  
288 environments. The use of buffered yeast extract broth with tween as an emulsifier, has been  
289 shown to be a suitable medium to assess Tea Tree EO activity against *Legionella* spp.<sup>(26)</sup> and  
290 Chang et al. (2008)<sup>(28)</sup> assessed the use of cinnamon oil in hot spring water at a range of pHs  
291 with ethanol being used as an emulsifying agent. Minimum Bacterial Concentrations  
292 (MBCs) against *L. pneumophila* ranged from 400-1200 mg µl<sup>-1</sup> with a contact time of 10  
293 mins and 400-750 µg ml<sup>-1</sup> with contact time of 60 minutes.

294 The way in which the components are being passed through the water may also be crucial to  
295 the antimicrobial efficacy of the citrus EO vapour. Linalool, which has a higher solubility in  
296 water (1589mg/l at 25°C) when sintered, is trapped within the water thus continuing to have  
297 an antimicrobial effect on the *Legionella* cells after 2 hrs exposure (Figure 4), resulting in an  
298 accumulation effect and in part may explain the 61% difference in concentration of the  
299 linalool between the passive and active systems at 24 hrs. However, both citral and β-pinene  
300 have a lower solubility in water (590 mg/l at 25°C and insoluble respectively) and are not  
301 retained within the water when sintered as Figure 5, shows the amount of citral and β-pinene  
302 in the water at any given time as they pass through the water before they evaporate. This  
303 suggests that the antimicrobial effect of citral and β-pinene may be based on a collision  
304 process between the compounds and the *Legionella* cells as they pass through the water. The

305 increase in concentration of the antimicrobial compounds is noted from 2 hrs onwards  
306 (Figures 3 & 4), corresponding to a reduction in the *Legionella* cells in water from the same  
307 time point (Figure 3). The increase of the antimicrobial compounds after 2hrs is also noted in  
308 the vapour release intensity of headspace with a 0.5 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> increase linalool and β-  
309 pinene and 2 log cells ml<sup>-1</sup> of citral <sup>(23)</sup>.

310 Since there are no acceptable levels of *Legionella* spp. specified by the HSE in the UK, the  
311 maintenance of equipment that are pre-disposed to *Legionella* spp. is the responsibility of the  
312 manager of the site/equipment, therefore, a range of different disinfectants and physical  
313 treatments are used including chlorine, monochloramine, UV and heat, all of which have  
314 drawbacks including rinsing, expensive equipment and running costs and are often not  
315 effective against inter-cellular *L. pneumophila*. The use of citrus antimicrobial vapour which  
316 is sintered through an enclosed water system such as air conditioning units and cooling  
317 towers may be a natural alternative that the FDA have deemed GRAS under general  
318 provisions of essential oils, oleoresins (solvent-free), and natural extractives <sup>(29)</sup>. The  
319 components identified to be antimicrobial (linalool, citral and β-pinene), are widely found in  
320 plants including fruits and herbs and often used within the food and fragrance industries.  
321 With Linalool having no recommended threshold limit value (TLV) or biological exposure  
322 index (BEI) and citral and β-pinene being listed by the International Fragrance Association  
323 (IFRA) as commonly being found in fragrances safe for use<sup>(30-32)</sup>.

324 In conclusion this citrus EO vapour may be a potential solution to controlling *Legionella* spp.  
325 from environmental sources such as soil and water. The novel delivery system using sinters  
326 to force hydrophobic compounds through water could allow for the use of EO oil based  
327 products in new arenas.

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Table 1. Chemical properties of antimicrobial components in the orange: bergamot EO<sup>(22)</sup>.

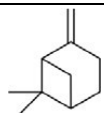
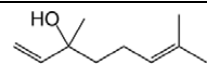
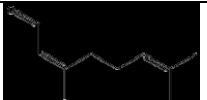
Name	Structure	Molar mass	Solubility in water	Partition coefficient (LogPow)
$\beta$ -pinene		136.23 g/mol	Insoluble	5.4 at 25 °C
Linalool		154.25 g/mol	1589mg/l at 25 °C	2.97 at 23.5 °C
Citral		152.23 g/mol	590 mg/l at 25 °C	3.0 at 25 °C

Table 2: Reduction of *Legionella* spp. in soil (mean  $\pm$  SE: n=3) when exposed to a citrus EO vapour for 24hrs.

	<i>L. longbecheae</i>	<i>L. bozemanii</i>	<i>L. pneumophila</i>
Control	1.2 $\pm$ 0.2	1.05 $\pm$ 0.28	0.56 $\pm$ 0.22
3.75 mg/l	1.47 $\pm$ 0.18	1.42 $\pm$ 0.32	0.55 $\pm$ 0.23
7.5 mg/l	1.65 $\pm$ 0.16	1.71 $\pm$ 0.25	0.64 $\pm$ 0.24
15 mg/l	1.53 $\pm$ 0.22	7.88 $\pm$ 0	0.7 $\pm$ 0.41

Figure 1: Schematic diagram of the setup of active exposure of *Legionella* spp. to the vapour of a citrus EO vapour

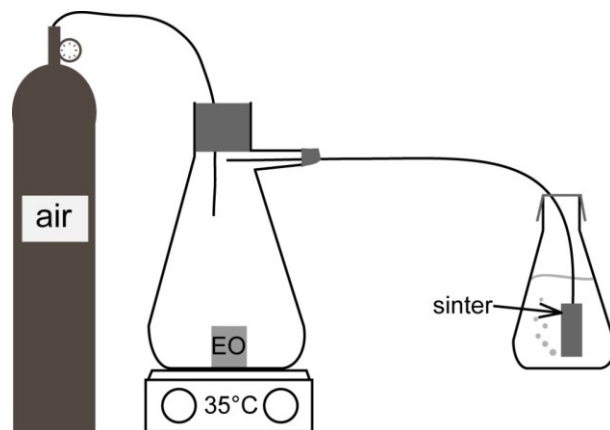


Figure 2: The mean survival of *L. pneumophila* when exposed to an antimicrobial citrus EO vapour in water via a sintering system. Control (exposed to air only) , —450 mg/l air, — and 15 g/l air —

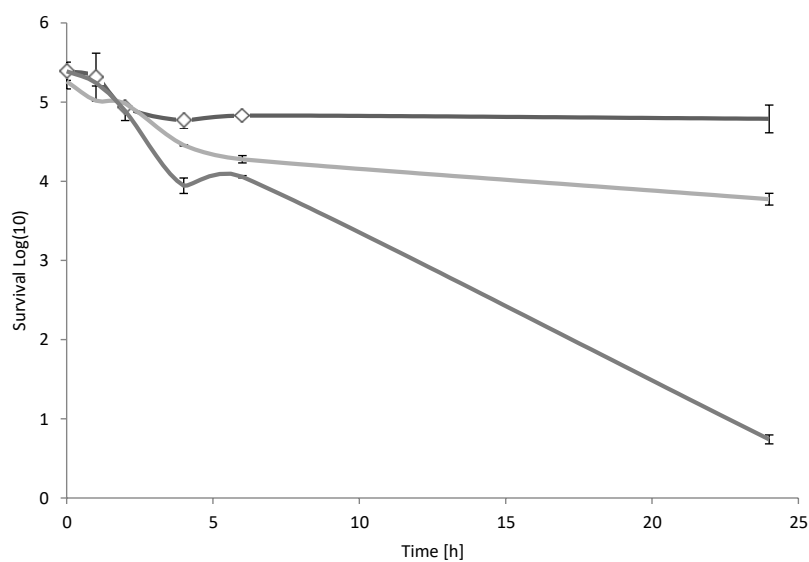


Figure 3: The mean survival of *Legionella* sp. when exposed to an antimicrobial citrus EO vapour (15g/l air) in water via a sintering system. *L. pneumophila* ---, *L. longbeachae* —, *L. bozemanii* — — co-cultured *L. pneumophila* — - — \*

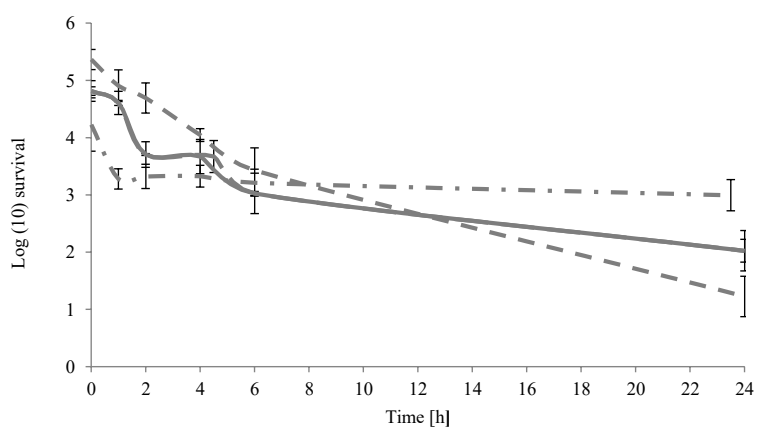


Figure 4. Linalool content in 100 ml water exposed to 15g/l antimicrobial citrus oil vapour in passive and active modes. Linalool-passive  $\diamond$  and Linalool-active  $\blacklozenge$

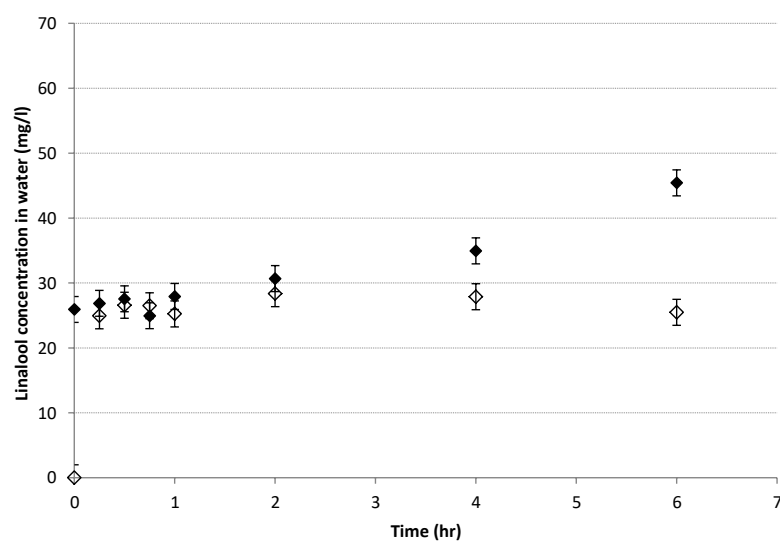


Figure 5. Antimicrobial agents in 100 ml ethanol exposed to 15g/l antimicrobial citrus oil vapour in passive and active modes.  $\beta$ -pinene-passive  $\triangle$ ,  $\beta$ -pinene-active  $\blacktriangle$ , Linalool-passive  $\diamond$ , Linalool-active  $\blacklozenge$ , Citral-passive  $\circ$  and Citral-active  $\bullet$

